INTRODUCTION

South and West Asia region occupies a pre-eminent position in overall US global strategy. Whether it was under Truman and Eisenhower doctrines in the wake of cold war period hotly chased during 1950s and 1960s or the period of detente during 1970s or the revival of cold war in early 1980s or the inauguration of an era of accommodation from confrontation between the superpowers since late 1980s, South and West Asia's strategic significance has never diminished in United State's global policy. This region is endowed with certain characteristics which are not present in other regions.

Strategic location of this region is very vital for United States because of politico-military and economic reasons. Countries like Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan have geographic contiguity with Soviet Union, an arch adversary of United States. Pro-US stance or anti-Soviet attitude of these countries is very vital for the United States not only to check the expansion of Soviet influence but also to enhance its own influence.

In West Asia, the Persian Gulf region contains bulk of petroleum reserves and, continued and uninterrupted supplies of petroleum is very vital for the economic survival
of western industrialized countries in general and the United States in particular. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iran possess about two-thirds of world's oil wealth. During 1970s, United States maintained cordial and friendly relations with these countries. However, a cool-off stage was envisaged in US-Iranian relations after the fall of Shah's regime in January 1979.

Apart from having pro-Western regimes in oil producing countries of Persian Gulf, United States had also assumed unto itself the responsibility of ensuring continuous and uninterrupted supply of oil through sea lanes of communications (SLOCs) such as persian gulf, strait of Hormuz and other vital outlets in the Indian Ocean. Enhanced Soviet presence in Indian Ocean, especially in the shadow of cold war could have hampered the smooth flow and supply of oil to the United States and its West European allies.

Inter and intra regional rivalries between and among the countries of Persian Gulf region and West Asia mainly on account of disputed borders as a consequence of colonial legacy and the weak regimes apprehensions from the powerful neighbours prompted these countries either to depend upon United States or Soviet Union for procuring armaments. The disputed nature of borders constituted a constant source
of tension which contributed to regional instability. Iraq's border disputed with Iran and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and South Yemen etc. are some such examples.

Israel has been the most significant factor of determining US policy towards West Asia and in evoking the response of region's countries towards Washington accordingly. Since its establishment in May 1948, Israel has enjoyed US patronage. United states regards Israel as its reliable strategic ally in the region. Because of American patronage, politically, economically and militarily, Israel has been in occupation of Arab territories since June 1967, and despite UN security council's resolution 242 which called for Israeli withdrawl from Arab occupied territories, the intransigent and aggressive attitude of Israel has led to outbreak of Arab hostilities in 1948-49, 1956, June 1967 and October 1973. During 1970s, United States provided massive economic and military assistance to Israel. The Arab countries regard Israel as a constant source of threat to their territorial integrity and regional security.

The region of West Asia, especially persian Gulf has been the largest importer of arms almost accounting for 48 percent of total arms imports by the Third World countries since the end of second world war. Induction of arms into the region registered substantial increase
in the aftermath of October 1973, when the active participants in the war Israel, Egypt and Syria, which had incurred heavy loss of weapons and equipment, sought to import arms to recoup the losses and attain strategic parity as deterrent to their adversaries. The use of oil as political weapon after the October 1973 war had resulted in the substantial augmentation of revenues of Arab oil producing countries - Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Iraq. Iran also reaped rich dividends. Since these countries also increased their arms imports to modernize their defence forces and to equip them with latest weapons.

United States and Soviet Union were the major arms suppliers to the region. Soviet arms supplies were mainly confined to Syria, Iraq and Egypt. Following estrangement in Soviet-Egyptian relations in early 1970s, Cairo's dependence on Soviet arms decreased. By the latter half of 1970s, Egypt had started importing arms in bulk from Washington. Other clients of US arms were Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Jordan and Iran.

It was because of these major factors that United States had developed vital stakes in the region. With respect to South Asia, the strategic location of Indian subcontinent mainly because of its proximity to Indian
Ocean and Gulf region and to Soviet union and China suited American foreign policy objectives under Truman doctrine to contain communism. Pakistan because of its antagonism with India mainly on Kashmir issue was looking for a powerful ally which could provide military and economic assistance. Thus the mutuality of strategic interests brought Pakistan and United States closer to each other. United States obliged Pakistan by providing substantial economic and military assistance. Pakistan responded by joining anti-communist military alliances CENTO and SEATO under the US patronage.

The fall of Shah regime in Iran in mid January 1979 and Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 served a severe blow to US strategic interests in South and west Asia. Consequently Washington contemplated to make up by propping up Saudi Arabia and Pakistan as the custodian of vital American interests in the region. Consequently during 1980s, Washington provided massive supplies of sophisticated weapons to Saudi Arabia and made available substantial economic and military assistance to Pakistan.

The unique characteristics of South and West Asia like its strategic location and significance, as the nerve centre of superpower rivalry, as a key to the future of
international peace and security especially in the aftermath of major Arab-Israeli conflicts, Suez crisis and Indo-Pakistan wars, which on occasions entailed the possibility of direct confrontation between the superpowers, presence of substantial oil reserves and the largest buyer of sophisticated arms, have been instrumental in attracting the attention of intellectuals, academicians, social scientists, defence experts, journalists etc. A plethora of literature in the form of books, research articles and journalistic comments has appeared which portrays different aspects of geo-political, military and other realms of activity in South and West Asia. A brief and selective review of some of the important works on the subject would be both interesting and instructive. Articles appearing the newspapers and editorial comments have been excluded though they have been occasionally made use of in the present study as per requirement.

Amitava Acharya's scholarly book¹ deals with United State's strategic involvement in the Persian Gulf region with the avowed objective of securing access to the region's oil resources, containing Soviet influence and ensuring the preservation of the conservative regimes in the Arabian Peninsula. The author has endeavoured to explain the nature
and dimensions of the US power protection strategy in the Gulf in the formative years which followed the fall of Shah of Iran, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and the outbreak of Iran-Iraq war. The book further deals with the formation of US Rapid Deployment, Joint Task Force and the US Central Command, their force structure and mobility assets and the network of US bases and facilities in the region. The nature of US contingency planning to counter both Soviet and intra-regional, including the Iran-Iraq war, the trends in US security cooperation with the Gulf countries and the role of pro-Western countries such as Israel, Jordan etc. are discussed and analysed in this book.

The period of 1970s marked a watershed in US strategy towards southwest Asia because the Nixon doctrine was put to acid test in the wake of development which obtained in the region during this period. However the book is useful for discerning US strategy toward Iran by the close of 1970s. It does not shed light on US policy toward south-west Asia. It serves very limited purpose for the present study.

Amin Hewedy's book\(^2\) has a fascinating title but it fails to meet even partially one requirement to ascertain

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the role of United States in south-west Asia especially during 1970s. The book primarily deals with the impact of excessive militarization by the prominent countries of the Middle East on their developmental programmes. Main thrust of the book is on the fact that increased militarization can lead to active opposition by political dissidents and to a country's internal unrest. This in turn can gear the economy to military expenditure which creates external aggression and regional security. The author has argued that lack of democracy in Arab countries and Israeli treatment of the Palestinians had been maintaining the conflict in the region. The book is interesting for general reading. However it does not contribute much in unfolding the subtleties of American strategy in the south-west Asia.

Anthony H. Cordesman and Abraham R. Wagner in their book have dealt in details about the geopolitical implications and strategic fall out of the Arab-Israeli conflict of 1973 and subsequent developments in the region. It covers the Arab-Israeli arms race from 1973 to 1989, as well as wars that have plagued the region. In a dispassionate analysis, the authors have focussed on military events and lessons. The politics of each conflict has been discussed only to the

extent necessary to understand the grand strategy, the strategy and the tactics of the conflict. Though the book deals with limited period of Arab-Israeli conflict, yet it is valuable from strategic and defence aspects because the topics covered in it include combatants, terrain, threat-assessment technologies, command, control and communication and types of weapons used. All these add to the utility of the book though for a limited period.

Similarly A.G. Naidu in his book has tried to analyse that the policy of the United States towards west Asia had been guided by its determination to safeguard and promote its economic, political and strategic interests in the region. Towards that end, the United States had striven to respond to the challenges posed to its interests by Soviet union and had directed its efforts towards stemming and countering an increase in Soviet influence in the region. The book has a limited scope because it deals with only Arab-Israel conflict of June 1967. The book has presented an in-depth analysis of developments leading to the outbreak of June 1967 war, the influence of Jewish lobby within the united states on the evolution of American policy towards West Asia and the consequences thereof. Because of its limited scope, the book is of partial utility in understanding the US strategy.

towards South-west Asia.

Another commendable work has been authored by Charge A. Rubenberg. In a provocative and probing alternative view of a cornerstone of American foreign policy the author has argued that US Israel partnership far from furthering American national interests in West Asia, has severely damaged them. Tracing the history of US-Israel relations from the partition of Palestine in 1947 through the war in Lebanon the author has illuminated the reasons for America's enormous support for Israel, delineates the pivotal role of the "pro-Israeli lobby" in maintaining that support, and reveals the extent to which American Foreign policy in the Middle East has been "mistakenly based on the assumption that Israel can be a true extension of American power. The author has aptly focussed on the ways in which US-Israeli partnership has both contributed to the cycle of conflict and the bloodshed in the Middle-east and under-mined US efforts to contain Soviet influence in the region.

Though this book does not take into account South-west Asian region as a whole which limits its contours to west Asia alone, yet the book is quite informative, analytical and adds abundantly to one's understanding of the intricacies of US policy towards West Asia particularly Israel.

Another interesting study has been done by Arthur J. Klinghoffer and Judith Apter which primarily deals with Soviet Union's policy towards Israel. Though the subject is of immense significance because it deals with Soviet policy which has been instrumental in determining American response towards, the region, yet it falls short of comprehensive assessment of superpowers interaction in south-west Asia. Similarly Abdul Redu Assiri's study about Kuwait sheds light on the foreign policy of one of the countries of the Gulf region.

In this book, the author has examined the major external events that have shaped Kuwaiti foreign policy and looks at how regional instabilities and domestic turmoil have limited Kuwait's foreign policy options. Since the book deals with one of the countries of Persian Gulf namely Kuwait, hence it has limited scope. However it provides passing references to regional developments.

Colin Lequin's edited book contains collection of articles on different aspects and developments in the Middle East. In this book, the broader Middle Eastern political scene during 1970s has been analysed under


three headings—the superpower rivalry, regional politics and domestic politics. The mid-1970s were years of achievement for the U.S. policy in the Middle East. The book highlights as to how the American diplomacy made good use of the ambiguous outcome of the October 1973 war and its own contribution to the opening of the "peace process" in the Arab-Israeli conflict. It re-established Washington's central position in the core area of the Middle East, expedited the Soviet Union’s ouster from Egypt and began to make inroads into the Soviet Union's position in Syria. But impressive as it may have seemed at the time, the new American policy in the Middle East and the new position it created were not free from serious flaws and weaknesses such as the growing American dependence on Middle Eastern oil. These were seriously exacerbated during the closing years of 1970s Syria Soviet counter-offensive which began in the outlying areas of the Middle East and by the errors and failures of the Carter Administration's policy in the years 1977-1979, particularly its Israeli and Afghan setbacks. The book shows how the image of a vigorous and resourceful American policy was replaced at the end of the decade by that of an effective Soviet offensive encountering a helpless and less than credible American response.
William J. Barnds in his book has provided in brilliant analysis of Soviet and American rivalry in the Indian subcontinent from the conclusion of the second world war to the Bangladesh crisis. The author in this book has taken pains to provide an indepth assessment of the evolution of US foreign policy towards the Indian subcontinent especially during the cold war period. The book is useful in ascertaining the background to developments in the Indian subcontinent and the policy response of both Soviet Union and United States. However since it deals with limited period and does not cover the west Asian region hence it falls short of providing a comprehensive assessment of US strategy towards south-west Asia particularly during 1970s. However it is helpful in enriching one's knowledge about political developments in South Asia during 1950s and 1960s.

Leela Yadav's book provides a comprehensive analysis of relations between Pakistan and United States from mid 1950s till the beginning of 1970s. It is a useful study which keeps in knowing the proximity of interests between Pakistan and the United States, irritants which developed.

between the two countries from time to time and India's reaction to US role on arms build up by Pakistan. It is a valuable and research oriented work which equips the reader with sharp analytical tools to extangle the knotty intricacies of American strategy of propping up military dictatorships in the Third World with Pakistan as a special case study. The author has provided peripheral reference to West Asian and Gulf countries as well. Hence it is a useful addition to available literature on South Asia.

Another book dealing with superpower's rivalry in the Indian sub-continent is written by Timothy George, R. Lotwak and Shahram Chubin. These authors have taken up the period from mid-1970s to early 1980s. The main focus is on India. India's relations, with Soviet Union united States and China have been aptly analysed. India's relations with the United States have been analysed mainly during president Carter and President Reagan's first term in office. Besides, Indo-Soviet relations have been dealt with more meticulously. The book is useful in understanding the superpowers attitude towards India and latter's response. It is a valuable addition to the existing literature on South Asia. However its main focus on India makes its scope

11. Timothy George, R. Lotwak and Shahram Chubin (eds.) *Secondly in Southern Asia ; India and the great powers* (London ; Gower, 1984).
limited because the West Asian region finds no treatment in this book.

why South Asian region had been engaging lesser American attention prior to 1970s and why during the Bangladesh crisis and in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 in region suddenly assumed added significance in US strategy and what prompted Washington to prefer Pakistan than to India, are such propping questions which have been by aptly dealt with B.M. Jain in his book\textsuperscript{12}. The hallmark of Dr. Jain's book is that it devotes substantial portion to the nuclear programme of Pakistan and American efforts in disuading the former to abandon its nuclear weapon programme. The author has meticulously analysed the Indian dilemma in view of supplies of sophisticated weapons by the United States to Pakistan. The book is useful for having an analytical assessment about US policy towards South Asia. However since it does not deal with South-west Asia, as such it become limited in scope.

Pakistan as the focal point of US strategy in South Asia has attracted considerable academic interest and prof. Surendra Chopra's edited book\textsuperscript{13} contains articles in this regard. The book is quite useful in enriching ones unders-

\textsuperscript{12} B.M. Jain, \textit{South Asia, India and the United States} (Jaipur, R.B.S.A. Publishers, 1987).

\textsuperscript{13} Surendra Chopra (ed.), \textit{Perspectives on Pakistan's Foreign Policy} (Amritsar : GNDU Press, 1983).
standing about Pakistan, its relations with superpowers, Islamic countries especially Iran and Saudi Arabia and Pakistan’s nuclear programme. Since Pakistan occupies a key position in subserving US strategic objectives in South Asia, hence its understanding is essential in comprehending the South Asian geopolitics. This is useful book but because of its too much emphasis on Pakistan, it does not serve the purpose of making an indepth assessment of US strategy towards South-west Asia.

After having made a brief review of selected bunch of books relevant to the subject, now it deems appropriate to refer to some of the important articles which have appeared on the subject in various research journals. The working of research articles not only as source of research articles, not only as source of information but also as catalysts and stimulators of thought and analysis for researcher enabling how to test his views and hypothesis and sharpen his methodological tools and techniques cannot be over-emphasized.

Bruce R. Kuniholm in his analytical article\textsuperscript{14} has tried to define the geo-strategic contours of South-West

in the aftermath of Indo-Pak war of December 1971, Pakistan continued to receive American arms clandestinely. The author has drawn his own broad conclusions with regard to US policy towards Pakistan.

J.K. Baral and V.E. Anand in a jointly authored article have endeavoured to develop parameters of US diplomacy towards South Asia on the basis of American arms supplies to Pakistan. The authors have based their analysis on US arms supplies to Pakistan in the wake of Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. The period covered and data used for analytical assessment is too less to draw broad or even specific conclusions about United States diplomacy towards South Asia. However authors seem to have realized this limitation and has avoided any ambiguous approach.

In the similar view, Leela Yadav in her article delves into the circumstantial evidence to highlight Pakistan's relations with the United States. The major part of the articles is devoted to bilateral realtions during 1950s and 1960s. The developments having bearing on US-Pakistan relations during 1970s find cursory treatment in this article.

These articles have been written with specific period and hence the interpretation of data and collection of facts are harnessed to support that specific theme. Though
these articles do not provide substantial help in developing a comprehensive framework for US strategy towards South-west Asia, yet they do serve the purpose of providing background information.

Besides these, there have appeared scores of articles in different periodicals in India and abroad on the various aspects of south-west Asia, its history, economy and foreign relations with special reference to the role of superpowers. However, the review of each individual article is beyond the scope of the present study. Such articles have been made use of at appropriate places in the succeeding pages.

A brief survey of the selected books and research articles, as analysed in the proceeding page, reveals that there is a paucity of authentic in-depth analytical studies on US policy towards South-west Asia. Of those who have written on the subject, quite a few have either covered certain specific aspect of west Asia or South Asia or have persisted the presenting bilateral relations between USA and individual country.

As regards the research articles, the author of a research article is confronting with many constraints like limited number of words, specific framework of his theme and compressed treatment of the issues intalled
in the article, which sometimes do not permit the author to present the entire problem in its full content.

The tangible outcome is that a wholistic treatment and interlinked issues like why US strategy toward West Asia had been more active than South Asia, linkages between oil and security of the region, US preference for Israel at the expense of other countries of the region, why there is no permanent peace in South West Asia, and why United States had been encouraging arms proliferation in the region and could US stop Pakistan and Israel from going nuclear etc. have not been attempted juxtaposedly. The available literature in the subject does provide a lot of incisive material but in a piecemeal manner requiring a systematic compilation, analytical treatment and assessment.

Apparently the subject of American strategy towards Southwest Asia which gained prominently active role in the region during the closing part of 1970s in the wake of downfall of Shah regime in Iran in January 1979 and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, seems to have received little serious attention from the academic quarters. Paucity of such literature confounds the confusion created by extensive general, journalistic and/or committed writings on the subject. The present study is a humble endeavour made in the tradition of academic objectivity to present an indepth assessment on the subject more fully and intensively.
The present study has been divided into five main chapters. The first chapter attempts to show the strategic significance of South and West Asian region for the US foreign policy. While giving the geographic location of South Asia, the chapter also briefly touches upon geopolitics of the region. The second chapter is an attempt to show the evolution of US strategy towards South Asia with major focus in the Indian subcontinent. It also tries to analyse American political, economic and military assistance to Pakistan, the strategic ally of the United States in the region. The third chapter deals with the issues like arms proliferation in the region, India's reactions to US arms supplies to Pakistan and India's acquisition of arms from Soviet Union and other sources to attain strategic parity with Pakistan and the question of nuclearization in South Asia with major emphasis on Pakistan's nuclear programme. The hallmark of this chapter is that all these developments are analysed as policy response by the United States.

The fourth chapter comprises an in-depth analysis of US policy towards West Asia. The West Asian region contains Israel, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, as main actors and the Persian Gulf countries, prominently Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. In this chapter, the major focus is on Israel and Iran which served as bastions of America's strategic interests in the region. The US political, economic and
military assistance to Israel and Iran during 1970s has been analysed in this chapter with pre-eminent emphasis as Arab-Israeli conflict in October 1973.

As a sequel to massive arms supplies to Israel and Iran and in the aftermath of October 1973 war, the search for arms by Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Persian Gulf countries especially Iraq and Saudi Arabia to attain strategic parity against their main adversary - Israel and local rivals, provided impetus to arms proliferation in the region. Besides, the increase the oil revenues of the Gulf oil producing countries in the aftermath of use of oil as a political weapon, countries like Iran, Kuwait, Iraq and Saudi Arabia diverted their revenues for procuring latest and sophisticated weapons. All these developments are analysed in the fifth chapter. While Iran till 1978, Saudi Arabia, Israel Jordan and Kuwait received massive armaments from the United States, and Egypt, Syria and Iraq emerged as the major arms market for Soviet Union. Besides, France, U.K., West Germany and Italy also supplied weapons to these countries. The chapter deals with these aspects thoroughly.

The trends emerging on the basis of this study have been summed up in the conclusion. It's evident that during 1970s, United States propped up regional surrogates like Israel and Iran by providing their massive economic and military assistance in West Asia to safeguard American

While pursuing the present study, reliance has been placed upon both primary as well as secondary sources. Primary sources have been used to provide authentic data and correct statements and while substantiating the arguments the use of secondary sources is made as supportive evidence or to supplement the evidence. Empirical data about arms assistance has been analysed. The contents have been analysed in their historical and appropriate content. Adequate use of tables has been made to substantiate the findings and to present cogent view.

The basic tools of research-comparative, historical, analytical and empirical have been relied upon. Optimum care has been taken to present a dispassionate and objective indepth analysis.